

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "President Bush's 2006 \$2.57 trillion budget is perpetuating a hoax, pulling a bait and switch, while reflecting a hypocritical religion. Just last week, in his State of the Union address, the President spent most of his time *talking* about reforming Social Security and winning the war in Iraq. Today he offered a *budget* that mentions neither. It's a budget that rewards the greedy and cuts the needy.

"The President likes to project his Judeo-Christian values and is fond of quoting from the Bible, but here's one verse he may have missed. Matthew 6:21 says, '*For where your **treasure** is there will your heart be also*'. ' He likes to use Christian language but his budget doesn't reflect Christian values.

"President Bush likes to reduce Christian concern and moral values to abortion and gay rights, but the primary religious and moral focus of the Bible is on helping the poor, ending economic injustice and establishing peace. President Bush's budget - *his treasure* - reflects the opposite. It is geared toward making the original unjust tax cuts for the rich permanent and increasing military spending, while cutting health programs for poor people and veterans, and trimming spending on the environment and education.

"About one-third of the programs being targeted for elimination are in the Education Department, including federal grant programs for local schools in such areas as vocational education, anti-drug efforts and Even Start, a \$225 million literacy program.

"His budget leaves out the huge future costs for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan and does not include the billions of dollars that will be needed for Bush's No. 1 domestic priority, overhauling Social Security, or making his tax cuts permanent. Bush's Social Security plan will add \$2 trillion to the budget deficit over the next 10 years and \$6 trillion over the next 20 years, and making tax cuts for the rich permanent will add even more debt.

"The most austere budget of his presidency would eliminate or vastly scale back 150 mostly domestic government programs - including trimming food stamp payments to the poor by \$1.1 billion. Outside defense, homeland security and the government's huge mandatory programs such as Social Security, Bush proposes cutting spending by 0.5 percent, the first such proposed cut since the Reagan administration battled with its own soaring deficits. Of 23 major

government agencies, 12 would see their budget authority reduced next year," Jackson concluded.